

Public Forum
Rental-Related Quality of Life Issues
Hosted by the Neighborhood Stabilization and Quality of Life Workgroup
Tuesday, January 29, 2013
7:00 p.m.

DRAFT MINUTES (as of 4/22/13)

Councilmember Stephanie Stulich opened the public forum at 7:04 p.m. and provided an overview of the purpose of the forum. She said the committee includes long-term residents, students, city staff, University of Maryland staff, Prince George's County police, and University of Maryland police. The City Council formed the Neighborhood Stabilization and Quality of Life Workgroup to develop alternative ideas for policies and practices regarding several long-term issues in College Park. The City's Rent Stabilization Ordinance was established as a way to address high rents, affordable housing and also the fact that over the past several decades, more and more single family housing had become group rental housing which led to many quality of life concerns from the long-term residents regarding noise, parties, etc.

Ms. Stulich said that for several years, landlords have been fighting the Rent Stabilization ordinance but recently some landlords came to the City Council asking if we could work together to develop alternative ways to deal with the root issues that led to the Rent Stabilization policy. As a result, the City Council created the Neighborhood Stabilization and Quality of Life Workgroup and placed the Rent Stabilization program on hold for a year to allow time for a collaboration process to happen with various stakeholders and members of the community.

This Public Forum is to hear from the residents of College Park, both long-term residents and students, to hopefully get some creative ideas and strategies that will be effective in dealing with long-term issues and also build a stronger sense of community between different groups that live in the City.

Councilmember Patrick Wojahn explained the process of the Neighborhood Stabilization and Quality of Life Workgroup and how they broke the group into four different task forces. Two public forums will take place. This first forum is to hear from residents of what the problems are that we need to work on addressing and to hear your ideas about potential solutions. We want to make this solution-oriented and start thinking about ways that we can solve these problems and not just hear about the problems themselves. There will be a second public forum in a couple of months, after the workgroup and taskforces have a chance to look into some of the solutions and put together a report on different ideas and proposals that not only the City Council, but also the University, the Police and other stakeholders can consider implementing. We are going to want to get feedback on these ideas at a second public forum.

Mr. Wojahn described the four task forces that have been created:

- **Issue Reduction:** Developing strategies for reducing problems that have negatively impacted the quality of life for people who live in the community. This includes noise and partying, public urination, vandalism, and public safety issues.
- **Housing Diversity:** Exploring ways to expand new housing options and increase the affordability of housing for students and others, and providing students with more options for places to live.

- **Neighbor Relations:** Exploring ways to improve student-resident relations by building a stronger sense of community and encouraging people to have respect for their neighbors.
- **Homeownership:** Exploring strategies for reversing the trend of conversions of owner-occupied properties to rental properties and attracting more faculty and others to purchase homes in College Park.

Councilmember Wojahn explained that people who wish to speak at the meeting tonight can sign up on the sign in sheets in the back of the room. Each person will have three minutes to speak. If you don't have a chance to say everything you want to tonight or would rather submit your comments in writing, you may email them to qualityoflife@collegeparkmd.gov or send them to the work group at 4500 Knox Road, College Park, MD 20740.

Lea Callahan, 4511 Guilford Road, owner of Zips Drycleaners:

Resident and a business owner in College Park for almost 25 years. Over the past 25 years there has been an increase in criminal and/or quality of life issues like student parties which lead to noise issues and a total disregard for the other residents within the community. There have also been many reports of sexual assaults, robberies of businesses, student and resident robberies, crack houses, car thefts, and break-ins.

Ms. Callahan also spoke of an incident that took place a few years ago with a resident of Wake Forest where a young man was robbed at gunpoint and placed in the trunk of his vehicle. Ms. Callahan stressed that she is pushing for strategically-located surveillance cameras in Calvert Hills. She believes if the police were monitoring these cameras, when they start to see large groups of students gathering they can send a car over to the area to make their presence known before the party gets out of control. She stated that the cameras at the rear of Zips aided the police to identify the armed robbers who held up some students outside the Quality Inn who ran behind Zips.

Ms. Callahan was told that back in the 70s, if a University student had not paid their parking tickets they wouldn't be allowed to get their grades nor graduate; this clearly made them accountable. That's an example of what she would like to see in the way of reprimand involving the University in conjunction with the police and the community.

Michael MacQueen, 4319 Woodberry Street, University Park (former homeowner on Wake Forest Drive):

Mr. MacQueen said that he and his wife left the Calvert Hills neighborhood because of problems with student rental houses. During the last 10-20 years, they had to contend with a rental house directly across the street which caused many nights of loud noise, disrupted sleep, red plastic cups, public urination, and many unanswered calls to the police. We noted with great dismay that when alcohol policies were tightened up in the Greek houses on campus, the situation in our neighborhoods immediately deteriorated with the rise of fraternity satellite houses that served only as party centrals. The neighborhood is full of rental houses with unmowed lawns, trash cans overflowing serving as open rodent baits, and landlords that performed necessary repairs only when things threaten the utility of their property. On several occasions, they have gone through the noise Control complaint process, a time-consuming affair that rarely produced any lasting change. Egregious behavior was often punished just by miscreants having to come down to this room for a Noise Board hearing and being levied a fine that got whittled down to nothing by the end of the session.

Mr. MacQueen stated that even though owner-occupied houses greatly outnumber the number of rental houses that our concerns are secondary to the interest of the landlords and student renters. Feels that the long-term interests of maintaining a stable community, where people take pride in living, are being sacrificed in the interest of those individuals who did not and do not contribute to the long-term quality of our community.

Dianne Bukoski, 6906 Wake Forest Drive:

Ms. Bukoski stated that she is a 42-year resident and during the last several years she and her family have seen an increase in rental property which has caused many noise disturbances due to parties that have gotten out of control. Mentioned a very egregious party on New Year's Eve, for which they did file a noise complaint. When the Noise Control Officer called the police, in that instance she felt the police were hampered in their ability to control the noise because they did not have decibel meters to use for levying a fine. There were 50-75 people, mostly in her yard and driveway and some were trying to get in her family's cars, as well as public urination. She asked if there could be a way that residents could report these kinds of student issues to the University.

Ms. Bukoski also requested that the City look into the traffic light situation, especially near the Varsity, as many red lights are causing traffic backups on Route 1 and on many occasions, you have to wait three light cycles prior to moving through the traffic light.

Lyle Magnuson, 4608 Hartwick Road:

Mr. Magnuson stated there are no garbage or recycling bins along the route through Old Town toward the Metro station. He suggested that the \$180 fee the City imposes on the rental properties should go toward purchasing recycling and trash containers for the Old Town area. Suggested the City could work with the University to design a lid that is shaped like a turtle with a catchy slogan and perhaps the fraternities and sororities could paint each year and make it a tourist attraction. This would get the garbage off the streets and may cause a sense of pride in the community.

Karen Klapac, 4805 Harvard Road:

Ms. Klapac said she has lived in College Park for 52 years and raised four children here. She wanted to state that she does not dislike college students and in fact some of her children are college students – but what she does dislike is the disregard of others that she has experienced from some students. Over the last few years her family has had four mirrors broken off their cars and her car had been side swiped. In two instances, a student was at fault. Ms. Klapac also stated that they have seen public urination, drunken party goers, and students throwing up on the side of their vehicles. Beer cans and bottles have been left on their cars and in their yards, and students sitting on the neighbors' cars. One time they asked the students to get off the cars and they refused. Ms. Klapac also stated that there are only two owner-occupied homes on her block and they feel outnumbered especially when there are large out of control parties. Every time there is a party, my husband and I feel that we have to stay up and guard our property. The last time there was someone messing around their car and my husband talked to them, the guy got belligerent and assaulted her husband. By the time the police got there he was nowhere to be found. She concluded that she knows she lives in a college town, but should not have to tolerate aggressive and disrespectful behavior. Ms. Klapac suggested that the police could possibly enforce underage drinking. She said she has never seen anyone carded. There is a house for sale on their block and a young couple came to look at it, and she felt she had to be honest with them, they have a baby, and the house next door is a rental and they have parties.

James Jalandoni, 4330 Hartwick Road, Apt. 617, Director of Governmental Affairs of the Student Government Association, member of College Park Sustainable Maryland Certified Green Team:

Mr. Jalandoni stated that students have very limited options of where they can live; you either have very expensive luxury apartments or very cheap and poorly maintained apartments. He emphasized the need for town- gown, harmony and collaboration. Believes there is a lack of communication and interaction between the students and homeowners which lead to disrespect. The City and the University have had several community events that were successful and that we can expand on these types of activities. Feels that if there were more activities where the students and residents can interact, it may possibly improve the relationship. Mentioned clean-up activities, the Farmers Market, and the possibility for a community garden. If we want to improve, we must get to know each other first.

Jim Mullins, 6103 Kenesaw Street:

Mr. Mullins stated that there is quite a difference between Old Town and north College Park as they do not have the same problems in the northern area. Concerned that laws are not being enforced as there are many owner-occupied properties that aren't being maintained. Feels that the outreach to the students is a great idea and tying criminal activities to graduation should be looked into. Mr. Mullins stressed that limiting rental properties will not increase community involvement and you should be able to buy a property, maintain it, and make a profit. He feels that trying to limit what landlords can do rather than to guide all residents to try to improve the City is a mistake.

Richard Williamson, 7011 Wake Forest Drive:

Mr. Williamson stated that he has large parties, rock bands, and beer drinking at his home, but the difference between his parties and the students is not what they are doing, it is how they are doing it. Students need to understand that they cannot run a nightclub in a residential neighborhood, talk at the top of their lungs, etc. As a volunteer fraternity advisor, his goal is to keep these parties safe, legal and non-burdensome to their neighbors. Asks fraternities whether their values match their actions. Fraternities need to improve their risk management and rethink how they act in the community. Keep the party inside, in the basement. Pick up your trash.

Mr. Williamson said that we need landlords who know how to rent to students who know how to live in a residential areas, and students need to be held accountable for their actions. Suggested that the University Police expand their patrol area since it is their students that are spilling over into the communities. Students should be taught the additional responsibilities of living in a home in a residential community.

Don Schmadel, 7201 Princeton Avenue:

Mr. Schmadel is concerned with crime, noise, and the condition of sidewalks. He is most concerned with the violent crimes in the City and would like to have information on how successful the prosecutions are. He also has an issue with dogs barking in the middle of the night every night of the week and sidewalks being blocked by trash cans or telephone poles and not being passable in winter. Mr. Schmadel also requested more recycling receptacles throughout the City.

John Rigg, 6809 Dartmouth Avenue, President of the Calvert Hills Citizens Association:

Mr. Rigg stated that there are many concerns from the citizens in the Calvert Hills area are heartfelt, serious, and increasing - such as an increase in late night revelers, underage drinking, trashing neighborhoods, public urination, vomiting, etc. He points out that there are laws on the books for most of these violations and they are often not enforced. Feels the University of Maryland in combination with the Prince George's County Police need to make sure our neighborhoods are adequately protected. Noted

that complaints about the bad behavior of certain students is not a criticism of all students. Some students are ideal neighbors – he particularly mentioned the CHUM co-op housing group that help hanged lights for the holiday tree lighting and have made a conscious effort to meet older neighbors and attend civic association meetings – thinks they are a model for creating a better town-gown community.

Steve Hill, Guildford Road:

Mr. Hill expressed appreciation for the committee and the public forum because there are things we endure that he feels often don't get the attention they deserve. He said he has had car windows smashed, mirrors damaged, siding broken on his home from thrown beer bottles, and things stolen off porch. He decorates his yard for the holidays and this year was the first in seven years where his decorations made it to December 25 without being completely destroyed. Mr. Hill is concerned when he sees police cars parked in the dark at the Friends School parking lot, thinks they should get out in the neighborhoods and be more visible.

Doug Hamilton, Fordham Road:

He believes only 5-10% of the rental properties cause problems, the rest are good neighbors. He has been to a Noise Control Board Hearing after making a complaint about a large, loud party that got out of hand. He said the Board imposed a \$250 fine to both the renters and the landlord, but later he learned that the landlord passed their \$250 fine on to the renters. When a landlord is found culpable, they should be paying the fine, not the tenant. Suggested making a procedure where records are kept on how often landlords are fined, how the landlord resolved the issue/violation, and to make sure the landlord is held accountable, not forcing the fine onto their tenants.

Brendan Harman, 7501 Hopkins Avenue:

Mr. Harman feels that the majority of the problems started when the University pushed their problems with the Fraternities and Sororities out into the community and the City should put more pressure on the University to address these problems. He feels that large groups should not be targeted as problems, since it's safer to travel in groups. He also feels the City targets Fraternities which is unfair, they already have more responsibility/accountability than most students and they work hard to keep the risks to a minimum. He also feels that the 55 decibel noise level is already too low, he stated that rain is 50 decibels. He would also like the City and University to allow tailgate parties.

Morgan Gale, 13352 Moonlight Trail Drive, Silver Spring; College Park business owner:

He lived here for 13 years and still has a business here so has a vested in the community. He feels the problem is with students drinking in the neighborhoods and then going out to the bars along Route 1. Originally his restaurant was open until 2 am but they had to cut back their hours and close at 11 pm because of the risk and problems with drunken patrons late in the evening. Unfortunately large groups sometimes should be targeted because they are sometimes a problem. Mr. Gale stated that bike patrols are very effective because they can see into the nooks and crannies and encourages the University of Maryland and the Prince George's County police to use this type of enforcement more often as vehicles do not have the same impact. Mr. Gale stated that code enforcement is being undermined by the court system as when a fine is levied, the courts reduce them. He wants the City to put pressure on the court and hold the court/judges accountable for holding to those fines and not reduce them. He also thinks the higher fines for repeat offenses should apply for a full calendar year and not just six months.

Page Lacey, 7305 Hopkins Avenue:

They have made major renovations to their home, but can't sell it because no family would want a home next to all rental properties. She spoke of problems with noise and tenants urinating off their front porch. Ms. Lacey feels when code or police patrol the area that they don't even look or see all the problems. Encouraged students to take their parties inside and then they won't have a problem.

Bob Coogan, 4615 Fordham Road:

He feels most of our problems are a "Matter of Law."

Pat Townsend, 6902 Wake Forest Drive:

The two major problems that she would like to see addressed are noise and trash. She is very frustrated that she has to resort to turning on a fan and closing the windows on nice nights just to drown out noise. She also objects to waking up in the morning to find red cups and trash all over her yard. Doesn't care who lives near her or whether they are students, professionals, or families as long as they are considerate, respect, and courteous to each other. She said we live in a college town but we don't live on a college campus.

Aaron Springer, 4622 Harvard Road:

Mr. Springer is seeing problems with alcohol moving more and more off campus. He engages with students because they are his neighbors and they should be work together as a team. Mr. Springer stated that he used to have good results from this; however within the past year, he has seen much more disrespect and vandalism and general mayhem in the streets. He said when he asks someone not to urinate in the yard because it's a residential neighborhood, he gets an "f-bomb." Mr. Springer noted that State law already says, "We have a right to a good, safe, peaceful existence." There are problems with students wandering the streets, having open containers, vandalism, and total disrespect for others. He reiterated that has also has good student neighbors but the bad behavior needs to be addressed.

Wendy Child, 4512 Hartwick Road:

Ms. Child stated that she could tell many stories like those of her neighbors but she won't repeat them all here. She said that interaction and collaboration with both the renters and the landlords has seemed to help in her neighborhood. They have reached out and met with renters and landlords, exchanged phone numbers, talked about problems, and have a workable relationship.

Joan Almon, 7303 Dartmouth Avenue:

College Park has lived in College Park for 36 years and she likes living here. Very happy with the bike and walking paths, easy access to Lake Artemisia as well as the Metro. However, she no longer recommends College Park as a place to live, because of the issues we've heard about tonight such as students walking down the street shouting. She appreciates that they often walk in large groups for protection but they don't need to shout. She thinks alcohol is a much bigger problem than it used to be and we need to address that in constructive ways. She is all in favor of enforcing laws but even more in favor of finding ways to come together as a neighborhood with a strong network.

Kelly Lueschow-Dineen, 4715 Norwich Road:

Stated that others have already described many of the issues that she came here to speak about – public urination, drunk and disorderly conduct, crazy parties that go all night or start at 10 in the morning. Police need to enforce the rules and crack down on the parties more effectively and noise enforcement is one of the ways to do this. Lowering the decibel level is very important, especially at night.

Ms. Lueschow-Dineen shared that she was devastated when they found out shortly after purchasing their house exactly how bad the problems would be. They expected there would be the occasional party and occasional red cup in the yard, but did not realize it would be so often including every single game day. Red cups and trash on a daily basis, and frequent drunk and disorderly students. She described one incident with a large party on a game day – the police broke up the party but then hundreds of students poured out of the house and it was like zombie apocalypse, many were so drunk they could not walk a straight line, and several people walked into her yard to urinate including four young women who squatted 50 yards from her house and blatantly dropped their pants in broad daylight in front of her young niece and nephew. This is not behavior that is becoming of a college student.

Neal Lerner, 4719 Pontiac Street:

Mr. Lerner feels that the community outlook regarding fraternities is too negative though appreciates that he also heard some positive things tonight. His home was unfairly targeted and fined for a noise violation that they did not commit and it was assumed they were at fault because they are in a fraternity. He is concerned about crime and described an incident when their house was burgled during winter break and someone stole over \$2,000 worth of things; their house was completely surrounded by other student houses so no one was around during winter break to see this happening and call the police. They did not feel welcome in the Old Town neighborhood the previous year so did not rent there again this year.

Liyue (Lily) Yan, 9530 Baltimore Avenue, #330A:

Stated that she is a graduate student who signed a lease before coming to the United States because she needed a place to live. The Mazza Grand Marc is marketed as a luxury student apartment complex and she pays \$912 a month to live in a basement apartment near a very loud heating system which makes a lot of noise, over 60 decibels at night. She feels the worst rooms are assigned to international students because they can't see the rooms prior to signing a lease.

Guy Levalley, 7305 Hopkins Avenue:

Mr. Levalley stated that in the past 22 years that he has seen their street go from all owner-occupied to only two. The street lights are out on Hopkins Avenue and Pepco has failed to fix them on five occasions. The 7300 block of Hopkins is dark and this endangers every person who lives here, especially since there were two sexual assaults in the area. Mr. Levalley also expressed concern about trash, including a rug that was in a neighbor's yard for several months, public urination, and vandalism to his wife's vehicle. Would like to see more Code Enforcement in the area and would like to see more coordination between code enforcement, police, and Pepco.

Leo Shapiro, 6907 Rhode Island Avenue:

An artificial wedge has been driven between residents and students. We need to stop seeing each other as antagonists. He feels it is offensive to be told, "You live in a college town so live with it." The real issues that surround us are bad behaviors. Public urination, vandalism, and uncivil and illegal behavior that would never be tolerated on the University of Maryland campus. Mr. Shapiro suggested that the University extend their honor code to off campus, which may have a positive impact on our neighborhoods.

We need a balance of owner-occupied vs. rental housing and a way of enforcing parties and uncivilized behavior. Would bet that most students that are causing these problems are not here tonight, and he thinks that it would be in the best interest of everyone to come together and solve these problems.

Shawn Greenspan, 4300 Knox Road:

Feels that student safety should be the primary focus of campus police. Shared a story about a friend leaving his house and being beaten up by three men. Later the police found the suspects and charged them; he commends the police for their great job. Students have the right to be safe while walking around campus and he hopes that with all these other things being brought up, it doesn't take the police focus away from safety on campus and in College Park.

Vincent Bellitti, 4250 Knox Road, President of the Inter-Fraternity Council:

He understands and appreciates all the concerns that have been brought up. There are many chapter presidents and other students involved with Greek life here tonight, this is something they are taking very seriously. He wants to work together and go forward to try to address some of these problems.

He has heard all the complaints tonight and is concerned that much of the blame is being put on fraternities. He commented that many problems are caused by the unrecognized fraternities that have been kicked off campus and other student groups. Has heard of issues with buses dropping drunk students off in residential areas and causing problems; he doesn't know of any fraternities that do that. He hopes we can take this opportunity to move forward and open the doors of communication between permanent residents and students.

Karen Needles, 6904 Carlton Terrace:

Students here tonight are most likely not the ones that are causing the problems. As a former teacher she would like to see if a student panel could be set up to judge their peers and set out the punishments. Suggested that permits be issued if you are going to hold a party off campus; that way the police department can focus on the areas that are having the parties. She asked if there is a limit to the number that can be in the house, is there a fire code that can be used to determine this. Ms. Needles also suggested that there be a consistency regarding noise enforcement and fines levied. She mentioned a landlord who told her he had received 15 noise warnings but had never received a fine; she believes that the pocketbook/wallet has the most impact on tenants and landlords.

Kathy Bryant, 7406 Columbia Avenue:

Ms. Bryant shared a letter that she presented to the City Council and the University in November regarding noise control issues. She said noise is the #1 problem in Old Town. Those of us who have full-time jobs have to be able to sleep at night. Ms. Bryant stressed that the decibels levels are too lax in the City. She listed other cities that have stricter decibel limits for night-time and daytime noise. So getting stricter decibel limits would not be abnormal, we would be doing something other communities are already doing.

Ramin Nejaddehghan, 7506 Rhode Island Avenue:

When he first moved here he was beaten up at 9:00 pm on a Wednesday evening when he was approached by three men who demanded money and beat him up when he resisted. He wonders where the police were at the time of this assault. However, he never reported this to the police because he felt that they wouldn't do anything. This summer he was walking with another male and two females through the City Hall parking lot and there was a group of eight individuals who were sitting on cars, they threw something at one of the females in the group. He came to her defense and as a result they were chased down College Avenue by the eight individuals. He called 911 but got an answering machine; he had no idea where the police were.

He is not going to downplay the problems that fraternities are causing; he has listened to all the other complaints tonight. However, he feels that safety is the #1 issue, because you can't put a monetary value on a person's life. He does not feel safe in College Park. All of his roommates have been robbed, vehicles broken into and their house robbed in the middle of the night with nothing being resolved or any justice.

Isabel Enerson, 7205 Rhode Island Avenue:

Ms. Enerson stated that this is her first experience living outside of her parent's home and she has learned a lot from the neighboring residents, some good and some not. She stated that her landlord interviews every tenant before they are allowed to live there. Ms. Enerson said she is a member of the CHUM co-op housing group which is different than most rentals in the area, they target low-income bracket people, they have young professionals and students living and working together as a team. They are trying to build institutional memory, and they are trying to have two-way communication with their neighbors. Would like to see more of this type of housing available. Ms. Enerson also stated that there are not a lot of student activities in the area that don't include alcohol, nor is there a grocery store within walking distance. She invited any community resident to come and attend their monthly potluck dinners so that we can learn from each other.

Clopper Almon, 7303 Dartmouth Avenue:

Mr. Almon said he has lived here for 46 years and he likes students and has taken numerous groups of students to Italy. He also said he agreed with many things that have been said, but he specifically wanted to talk about the Code of Student Conduct and Judiciary System that deals with infractions of this code. He commented that the code is not totally limited to the campus and feels that it could be expanded to cover more of College Park. He urged the Council to work closely with the Judiciary System of the University of Maryland and felt they could often handle problems much better than if the Prince George's County Police had to get involved.

Bob Kidwell, 1005 Nora Drive, Silver Spring, Maryland:

His family owns some undeveloped lots in Old Town and is working to build seven owner-occupied houses on that land. The committee's work is very important because if the quality of life in College Park is so degraded, how is he going to get families to buy the houses? Suggested that if we need to work with the University to build more dormitory space, possibly working with the people who own the Knox Boxes to increase the density of housing. Suggested that we may need more Noise Control officers and if a landlord is fined, that they be accountable and not their tenants.

David Kidwell-Slak, 4704 College Avenue:

Feels that a lack of community engagement is a big problem in College Park. Suggested that satellite fraternity houses or sports group houses be registered with the University so that they are aware if the house becomes problematic. Some suggestions would be to give awards to rental properties with good behavior and for a house that has a noise violation, require community service in addition to levying a fine. This would increase community involvement and pride in their neighborhood especially if they have to clean up the area around their neighborhood. Mr. Kidwell-Slak suggested ride alongs with the noise officer to find out how the process works.

Bob Schnabel, 7400 Dartmouth Avenue:

Has seen many changes in Old Town and Calvert Hills over the past 40+ years. When he moved to Old Town in 1978, the percentage of owner-occupied houses was over 70%, but now is probably less than 20%. Why did this change take place? It was primarily because of noise and rowdy behavior – and now

the same change is starting to happen in Calvert Hills. College is supposed to be a civilized and educational experience, yet the connotation of a college town has become the polar opposite of that. There is no accountability or too little accountability for improper behavior. The noise ordinance and enforcement needs strengthening – daytime parties that take place within the current 65 decibel limit are intolerable for non-student residents – this should be reduced to 60 decibels and the night decibels need to be changed from 55 to 50 decibels. There should be no time when the noise ordinance is not being enforced by code officers. The lack of sufficient noise officers and code officers needs to be addressed as well as the way the officer responds to a party. The white car coming up the street branded with the letters C-O-D-E is always a giveaway resulting in a temporary reduction in the noise. If the party is taking place in the back yard, the decibel reading should be taken that reflects that experience, not from the front. When residents seek redress through the hearing process and the Board fines that an offense has occurred, the fine should not be reduced; this is ineffectual.

Dennis Herschbach, 7309 Princeton Avenue:

Lived here for 37 years and it's getting worse, not better. Has endured many of the same problems that he has heard here tonight: public urination, theft, throwing bricks through the window, lighting garbage carts on fire, and fornication both in the back yard and the front yard. These problems originated with the University and they are not going to be solved until we get the University involved. He agreed with the earlier suggestion about the Judicial Board at the University. It used to be that you could call the University Police when there was a problem and they would get involved, which would then involve the judicial board and the University. Today this is not the case and the students know this. They know they are not going to get in trouble, they just pay the fines. The University needs to take responsibility for these problems that are happening in our neighborhoods, since they forced this problem on us when they pushed these students out into the community. The University needs to be part of the solution; the City cannot do it alone.

Adele Ellis, 4608 Beechwood Road:

Has noticed that more renters are renting houses in her neighborhood because they want to get away from constraints on their behaviors, not because it saves them money. Not all parties are created equal, but we need more enforcement of our local laws. We use to be able to let a few things slide, but we now need to respond to this changing environment. To students who say, "This is a college town, what do you expect." I say, "I expect you to enjoy your emancipation on the college campus and in college housing. When you move into a residential neighborhood, you are making a choice to live among adults and their children and should behave accordingly.

The University needs to take more responsibility for its students both on campus and off. The Student Code of Conduct needs to expand beyond campus as it is perfectly reasonable that students should be able to behave at least as well as off campus as on.

There should be more code enforcement, more safety for both students and residents. She encourages responsible students and organizations to foster that behavior in others where it is badly needed and for the University to protect, govern, and discipline these students.

Richard Ellis, 4608 Beechwood Road:

Agrees with many viewpoints stated here tonight and also believes that the problem is just getting worse. Most of the problem behaviors happening off campus are illegal - underage drinking, trespassing, littering, vandalism, and theft. He asks of students, "Would you do these behaviors in a house next to your parent's house?"

Landlords are not influencing their tenants and they are not paying the price when their tenant disobeys the rules and regulations. Code enforcement needs improvement, and he would like to see the Code of Student Conduct expanded off campus.

Eve Muller, 4710 College Avenue:

Frustrated that it is often difficult to reach the Noise Enforcement Officer and if you do get in touch with them, often there is no officer is on duty. If the offenders go before the Noise Control Board, the fines are often reduced or stricken. First and foremost she asked that the City act on the recommendations submitted by the Old Town Civic Association for addressing noise control problems – strengthen the city noise ordinance, provide better coverage in terms of both noise control officers and contract police, allow contract police to use decibel meters and be able to issue citations, and crack down on underage drinking and open containers and fraternity satellite houses. Believe that these changes will help control the behavior of the few individuals who are responsible for most neighborhood problems, making our community a less hostile and ultimately more livable place for long-term residents and students alike.

Nigel Key, 4710 College Avenue:

Most of the Quality of Life issues in Old Town occur from out-of-control parties. Tens and even hundreds of students gather and the amplified music and yelling can be heard from blocks away. He spoke about numerous incidents with loud parties, vandalism, and people urinating in front of his elementary-age children. Thinks a small percentage of the houses cause most of the problems and most of these are related to fraternities. Old Town is not an environment where University faculty and staff or indeed anyone over the age of 21 can live comfortably. We need to think of ways to get the parties out of the neighborhoods, by getting the University to allow alcohol and parties on campus. There needs to be a crackdown on obnoxious behavior and improvement of the Code Enforcement system. Supports the recommendations of the Old Town Civic Association. Code Enforcement Officers shouldn't have to wait for a police officer in order to take a decibel reading; this delays or prevents enforcement. Contact police officers need to enforce underage drinking and open container laws. The police also are not enforcing county laws and should be doing so proactively. He believes we should issue permits for parties over 25 people to better monitor the situation.

Landon Greer, 8000 Boteler Lane, Chief of Staff for the Student Government Association:

Recognizes that there are issues and does not condone the bad behavior. He has not heard of a lot of solutions to the problem. There needs to be a collaborative effort and the students need to be involved. There are not a lot of affordable housing options but that does not give students a right to act irresponsibly or disrespectfully. Respect needs to go both ways, we shouldn't be calling students "kids/children" when they are adults, this does not help with the respect issues. There needs to be safer options: various night life options need to be provided that may or may not include drinking and they should be placed in an area that is safe and not in a back alley where they are not patrolled. There needs to be more communication and everyone needs to work together, involve more students in this process.

Cameron Easter, 4700 Drexel Road:

He is a police officer with the U.S. Park Police and a graduate of the University so he can see both sides of the argument. The law is the law, students are adults, and we need more enforcement. He is well aware of the politics of enforcement in Prince George's County and he understands that when you are issued a ticket by a police officer, it is ultimately decided down at the court house, where it becomes very lenient.

Suggested that the City Council should get on board with the judicial system in the County, have stricter enforcement and a more police presence (police on bicycles). Would also like to see more traffic enforcement in the neighborhood.

John Hawvermale, 1342 Excalibur Lane, Silver Spring, Maryland:

His son was a victim of an armed robbery. Police responded quickly and caught the suspect, he suspects that this is because of the collaboration of UMD Police and the Prince George's County Police and would like to see this collaboration continue. Suggested that we identify the problem houses and see what we, as a group, can do about them. We all need to keep working together toward a solution – Landlords, the City, the University, Police, and students - the entire community.

Bill Coleman, 7302 Dickinson Avenue:

Has the same issue with noise as everyone else. Would like to see stronger traffic enforcement as he has been hit twice while in the crosswalk and there is speeding, driving the wrong way, and running stop signs in the Old Town area. He feels that no one is held accountable and until this happens, we will have no change.

Arun Ivatury, 6705 Rhode Island Avenue:

He loves living in College Park and he thinks it's kind of sad that this is a committee for all of College Park but it seems we are mostly talking about Old Town and Calvert Hills. Some of the solutions would include University involvement, student and peer enforcement, and mandated permits for large parties. We need to find a way to dissuade the concentration of rental houses in the City making it a good mix of both rental and resident owned. He hasn't heard much lately about a College Park police force, wants to know if this would be feasible.

Ryan Heisinger, 4210A Guilford Avenue:

There is a false dichotomy with the way people view the student body. It's not that we have good students or bad students, there are some very poorly behaved students and some very well behaved students. Calling the students children is offensive and it creates a hostile environment. Since most of the complaints are from residents, he suggested that more students need to be a part of the solution and they need to be on this NSQLWG committee. We need to not just vent but find solutions.

Dee Frostbutter, 4608 Calvert Road:

He is a student who lives in a group house and he has experienced a significant amount of harassment and verbal assaults from other student neighbors. The University of Maryland is in the top 10 for sexual assaults in the country. Unfortunately since the University pushed the parties out of Fraternity Row, the parties have moved to satellite houses which has caused more sexual assaults in the neighborhoods. On several occasions they have had to call the police for the use of hate speech from a fraternity satellite house, and the police said they can't do anything about this unless there was a physically assault. Would like to see hate speech laws on the books.

Richard Higgins, 4801 Guildford Road:

He is the Housing Committee point person for the University of Maryland Co-operative Housing (CHUM) group. He is the one who looks for houses to rent and understands the housing dynamics in College Park that we need to learn to interact with. The cost of living on campus is expensive when you have to include the cost of food. This has driven students to the neighborhoods where they can afford to live. Everyone needs to start reaching out to your neighbors and get to know them. Block parties were a big part of life

growing up; they might be something to think about as it would be a good way to get the groups together and neighbors mingling. Students would be less likely to run around late at night making all kinds of noise if they knew their neighbors. More community events are needed.

Steven Herschkowitz, Graduate Gardens, 4331 Rowalt Drive, #101:

He has worked with many of the people on this committee when he was with the City-University Partnership and many other subcommittees. Thought that this committee was working on rent stabilization issues but calling this the forum on Quality of Life is inherently one-sided. We need to add twice as many students to this Board in order to find solutions. He hopes that the NSQLWG Committee would engage in something like the CHUM co-op housing group, incentivize students, talk to the fraternity council and sorority organizations and other student leaders and bring them in and talk to them and see what they would like to see different in this City.

Mr. Herschkowitz also spoke about the lack of economic development in the City. There needs to be a supermarket in the area, 18+ clubs, bars, and a movie theater, something that can engage students in activities at night. He encouraged the committee to focus on what the issues are rather than what the consequences are.

David Colon Cabrera, 4225 Rowalt Drive, President of Graduate Student Government:

At a recently held student government meeting several issues were discussed: Some landlords do not maintain adequate conditions in their properties; they put the bare minimum into keeping the house livable. There is a lack of amenities in College Park that are within walking distance, no crosswalk on Route 1 by Shoppers Food Warehouse, and a lack of sidewalks on much of Route 1. Route 1 is hazardous all throughout the City, all the way to IKEA, we need to have it more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

Cindy Lollar, 4607 Fordham Road:

Agrees with most of the comments made tonight; however, she is very concerned with property values as her home is a big part of her retirement plan. She appreciates the students who are concerned with the quality of life issues, but feels that it is much different for a student who does not have the same perspective as someone who owns and lives in their home. She would like to hear more solutions about what can be done about problem landlords and problem houses.

Samantha Zwerling, 4230 Knox Road, Undergraduate Student Body President:

She has been to many of these meetings and has asked to invite other student members to in on these meetings, but has been denied on several occasions. There is a 94% saturation rate on campus and the University has not taken enough responsibility to make sure students are living on campus. She commends the SGA Executive Board, CHUM, Greek members, and all the other students for coming out tonight; as we have shown that we want to be at this table to help find solutions. There have also been some other meetings that we (student representatives) have not been invited to. She asks that they invite the students to these meetings so they can be part of the solution.

Chief David Mitchell, Chief of Police for the University of Maryland:

He has heard a lot tonight, some of it he's heard before and some of it's new. University Police enforce the law and they will continue to do so. In the past two years, there were hundreds of arrests in Old Town, almost 500 drunk drivers and we are not going to arrest our way out of these problems. He is amazed that the City has granted permits for the great quantities of rental housing which he feels has led to some of the problems. State law provides procedures for nuisance abatement and could be used in the City. The

University is committed to moving forward to expand University Police concurrent jurisdiction to more areas of College Park. They also are committed to working with the City to expand our camera network coverage. It's going to take a lot more than enforcement to bring about a better quality of life. He agrees that more student involvement is needed.

Greg Waterworth, 7310 Dickenson Avenue:

Has been given the task to represent Greek students at the University of Maryland. We do tend to get a bad rep but they do have several good events and would like to get the residents involved. Since we get new students every year, that means every four years we have an entirely new student body and the new body needs to get involved since they are coming in with a different attitude. Hopefully as a committed student body, we can help change for the better.

Sean O'Donnell, 7006 Wake Forest Road:

On any warm weekend evening around 2:00 am, he will see fluids, people passed out on the road, people attempting to steal street signs, and drunken people trying to enter his home swearing that they live there. As a resident, his incentive to keeping his neighborhood strong is his investment here, his house, his kids, their future. College students don't have that long-term incentive, they move in and out in a few years. The University needs to come up with some kind of incentive to make sure the students understand and are invested in their own behavior. The University in Texas that he went to as an undergrad prided itself on having a big community service day – it is the largest public, community involvement event of this sort in the country where the students at the school go out to the residents and they engage them. They engage them in all their cultural events as well.

Gloria Aparicio-Blackwell, Susquehanna Building, University of Maryland:

Works at the University in the Office of Community Engagement. We are trying to do the best we can to bring the community together and everyone will have that opportunity during Good Neighbor Day. This is a day where the students and residents can come together with a variety of events. The University is doing all they can to address these issues. There are no easy solutions, and not one solution will work fix everything, it's about giving us the time to find the solutions. We are always looking for students to help so please get involved.

Stephanie Stulich (closing):

If you would like to be on the mailing list you can write to: QualityofLife@CollegeParkMD.gov and ask to be on that mailing list. If you would like to send in comments via email you may send them to 4500 Knox Road, College Park MD 20740. Please submit by one week from today.

Meeting Concluded: 10:10 p.m.